AMERICA'S #1 SUPER HERO!

ECLIPSE

MIRACLEMAN

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™

BY ALAN MOORE
AND ALAN DAVIS

MIRACLEMAN

BOOK TWO:

CATGAMES

"DOWNWIND, A SCENT, A STRONG SCENT..."

"A **WRONG** SCENT."

"THICK, POWERFUL URINE, AND BITTER, ROTTING METAL..."

"ROTTING METAL?"

"SOMETHING BAD."

"SOMETHING BIG."

"SOMETHING COMING."

YOU THINK HE WILL CATCH THE JAGUAR, HERR DOKTOR? IT IS A BIG CAT. MOST DEADLY. MOST EFFICIENT.

OH YES. COMPARED TO THE GENTLE HERBIVORES IT **FEEDS** ON. AND THEREIN LIES ITS FATAL FLAW, GUNTER...

IT IMAGINES THAT IT IS INVULNERABLE.

"...AND IT ISN'T."

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OH **SURE**... MIRACLEMAN CAN'T BE HURT.

BUT **YOU** CAN.

YOU CAN GET SHOT IN A LIFT BY A GOVERNMENT KILLER AND...

LOOK, I'M GOING TO HAVE A **BABY**. DOESN'T THAT **MEAN** ANYTHING TO YOU?

YES! CHRIST, LIZ, OF **COURSE** IT DOES.

BUT THIS ISN'T MY FAULT. BEING MIRACLEMAN ISN'T MY FAULT. IT WAS SOMETHING THAT WAS **DONE** TO ME.

AND NOW I'M MIRACLEMAN, AND IT'S A DANGEROUS WORLD ALL OF A SUDDEN.

I CAN'T SAY ANYTHING THAT WILL REASSURE YOU, LIZ.

YOU'D BETTER TALK TO **HIM**...

BUT THAT'S JUST **RUNNING AWAY** FROM IT MIKE. WE'VE GOT TO...

MIKE? WHERE ARE YOU...

...GOING?

"DOWNWIND, A SOUND NOW, A SPLINTERING. HAMMERING VIBRATION BENEATH THE PAWS. DEATH COMING."

"HUNGRY DEATH."

WHAT'S THE MATTER? NOT HUNGRY TODAY?

LOOK...JUST ONE MORE MOUTHFUL. COME ON...GOBBLE IT UP. JUST FOR ME...

HOW'D YOU LIKE TO GOBBLE **HER** UP, EH, JOHNNY BOY?

HOW'D YOU LIKE TO SINK YOUR TEETH INTO **THAT** AND LET THE JUICE RUN DOWN YOUR CHIN?

YOU'D LOVE IT, WOULDN'T YOU?

YOU COULD HAVE HER, JOHNNY. ANY WAY YOU LIKED.

ANY... WAY...YOU... **LIKED.**

YOU ONLY HAVE TO SAY THE WORD.

LET ME OUT, JOHNNY JUST FOR A LITTLE WHILE.

SHE'S GOT TERRIFIC BREASTS. DON'T YOU THINK SO, JOHNNY? AND LOOK AT HER **LEGS**...

SHUT UP! I **WON'T** LET YOU OUT!! I **WON'T!**

UH...I MEAN... I **CAN'T** LET YOU OUT. I DON'T HAVE THE POWER ANYMORE.

THAT'S WHAT I MEANT TO SAY... I **CAN'T.**

NOT UNTIL A SECOND AGO.

TO BE HONEST, JOHNNY, I NEVER THOUGHT YOU **COULD**...

"A TRAP."

"A TRAP THAT SMELLS OF WIRE AND BLOOD AND SPRING-LOADED JAWS. A TRAP. A TRAP THAT RUNS AND SNIFFS AND BREATHES..."

"...AND FOLLOWS."

IT SEEMS YOU HAVE ME WHERE YOU WANT ME, MR. CREAM. WHAT ARE YOUR TERMS?

OH, THEY ARE NOT SEVERE ONES, SIR DENNIS.

I SIMPLY REQUIRE THAT NEITHER I NOR MY UNNAMED ASSOCIATES SHOULD BE MOLESTED IN ANY WAY, AND THAT ALL INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE ZARATHUSTRA PROJECT BE SUSPENDED FORTHWITH.

AS I HAVE STATED, SHOULD ANY HARM COME TO ME, SEVERAL NATIONAL NEWSPAPERS WILL BE RECEIVING LARGE AND POTENTIALLY EMBARRASING WADS OF DOCUMENTATION.

CREAM... WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ***GAIN*** FROM ALL THIS?

WHY, ***POWER***, SIR DENNIS. POWER. SURELY THIS IS NOT A FOREIGN CONCEPT TO YOU?

NO, NO INDEED.

BUT ARE YOU AWARE... ARE YOU ***REALLY*** AWARE OF JUST HOW ***MUCH*** POWER THIS CREATURE POSSESSES?

YOU'RE OUT OF YOUR DEPTH, CREAM. THIS MONSTER... IT SHOULDN'T EXIST. ITS VERY PROXIMITY DESTROYS PEOPLE. PEOPLE LIKE ME. PEOPLE LIKE YOU.

YOU MADE IT AN ENEMY. I MADE IT AN ALLY. THERE IS THE DIFFERENCE.

NOT AT ALL, MR. CREAM. ***IT*** HAS MADE ***YOU*** ITS ***PET!***

HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT HOW LITTLE HE MUST CARE ABOUT US? AS A SPECIES? HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT WHAT ***WE*** MUST LOOK LIKE TO ***HIM?***

LIKE ***ANIMALS***, CREAM...

"LIKE FRIGHTENED, STUPID ANIMALS."

HIS MUSCLES SWIM LIKE FISH BENEATH HIS SKIN, HIS SKIN THAT GLIMMERS, ALIVE WITH STARS. HIS EYES DROWN HER. HE IS LIKE A GOD.

AND THERE IS NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF.

THE EMPTY AIR BETWEEN THEM IS ALIVE WITH INVISIBLE SIGNALS: THE SEMAPHOR OF DILATED PUPILS, THE MORSE OF HER BREATHING. HE APPROACHES. HER MOUTH IS DRY.

THERE IS NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF.

HANDS THAT CAN TEAR APART MOUNTAINS DRAW LIGHTNING-LINES DOWN HER SPINE.

FINGERS THAT CAN CRUMPLE STEEL TRACE THE SILENT 'O' OF HER LIPS.

SHE IS HIS WIFE. HIS BABY IS INSIDE HER.

HE WILL ALLOW NO HARM TO COME TO HER.

THERE IS NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF.

NOTHING.

SO WHY DOES SHE FEEL SO VULNERABLE?

AND AFRAID.

AND HUNTED.

"IT CAN'T RUN. IT CAN'T RUN ANYMORE."

"IT WILL HAVE TO TURN."

"IT WILL HAVE TO FIGHT."

"HERE IT COMES."

"NOW!"

NOW...

NOW...

NOW!!

TO BE CONTINUED...

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JASON OAKEY: NINE YEARS OLD, ALSO KNOWN AS "ANNIE" BECAUSE OF ANNIE OAKLEY WHICH HAS AN 'L' SO IT'S A STUPID NICK-NAME ANYWAY AND HE WISHES GARRY WATTS WOULD LEAVE IT OUT...

CURRENT WHEREABOUTS: EPPING FOREST, INSPECTING HIS EMER-GENCY SUPPLIES, SECRETED THUS AGAINST THE CONTINGENCY OF A THERMO-NUCLEAR WAR.

(1 SPRING-LOADED GUN THAT FIRED DRIED PEAS, 1 PKT. CUSTARD CREAMS NOT YET QUITE SOFT ENOUGH TO EAT, 2 COPIES "HEALTH AND EFFICIENCY", 1 PKT. DRIED PEAS, 4 ROTHMANS.)

HE IS CONSIDERING WAYS IN WHICH TO MAKE AN ANTI-RADIATION SUIT OUT OF OVEN-FOIL...

...WHEN HE NOTICES THE GLITTERING.

MIRACLEMAN

ONE OF THOSE QUIET MOMENTS

ARE YOU A POUF?

OR ARE YOU A NERO?

YOU KNOW.

A NERO.

A SOUP-ARREARO.

A SUPER HERO?

YES. YES, I SUPPOSE I AM.

MY NAME'S MIRACLEMAN..

JASON OAKEY.

NICE TO MEET YOU.

WHAT'S ALL THAT SHINY STUFF?

IT'S MY FORCEFIELD.

I CALL IT THE 'TINKERBELL EFFECT'.

TINKERBELL IN ***PETER PAN***. YOU KNOW PETER PAN?

NOT PERSONALLY.

NO.

WELL, TINKERBELL FOLLOWED PETER PAN AROUND. TINKERBELL WAS A ***FAIRY***, AND...

FMF

OKAY.

OKAY, LET'S SETTLE THIS ISSUE IN A GENTLEMANLY FASHION.

STAND BACK OVER THERE A LITTLE.

THAT'S ABOUT FAR ENOUGH.

NOW WATCH THIS CAREFULLY...

SORRY I CALLED YOU A POUF.

THAT'S ALRIGHT.

IT WAS THE BLACK EYEBROWS. I THOUGHT YOUR HAIR WAS DYED

IT ISN'T.

IF YOU GIVE ME SOME CHEMICALS TO DRINK THAT MAKE ME HAVE SUPER-POWERS, CAN I BE YOUR BOY PARTNER?

NO.

COULD YOU SAVE THE WORLD, OR AT LEAST ME AND MY MATES, IF THEY HAD A NUCLEAR WAR?

I WOULDN'T LIKE TO PROMISE...

...BUT I'D DO MY BEST.

ALRIGHT. CAN'T SAY FAIRER THAN THAT.

I GOTTA GO HOME NOW.

ME, TOO. GOODBYE, JASON.

"CHILDREN HAVE THE STRANGEST ADVENTURES WITHOUT BEING TROUBLED BY THEM."

"FOR INSTANCE, THEY MAY REMEMBER TO MENTION, A WEEK AFTER THE EVENT HAPPENED, THAT WHEN THEY WERE IN THE WOODS THEY MET THEIR DEAD FATHER..."

"...AND HAD A GAME WITH HIM." —PETER PAN AND WENDY, BY J.M. BARRIE.

G'BYE.

LATER.

HELLO, LIZ?

I WAS JUST OVER IN EPPING FOREST. I MET THIS INCREDIBLE LITTLE KID, AND...

...AND...

LIZ?

IT WAS ONE OF THOSE QUIET MOMENTS.

TO BE CONTINUED...

THROUGH THE GARDEN OF BARON SATURDAY HE RUNS, WITH HEAVY LEGS AND A CARPET OF INSECTS THAT TWISTS AND THRASHES BENEATH HIS NAKED FEET.

THROUGH THE CORPSE-ORCHARD. THROUGH THE BONEYARDS...

STRANGE FRUIT BRUSHES HIS CHEEKS. THE SKINLESS ARISTOCRAT OF THE CEMETARIES FOLLOWS CLOSE BEHIND, WHITE HEAD NODDING, SMILING, TOP HAT FALLEN OVER ONE SOCKET...

SOMEWHERE, A BIRD SCREAMS.

AND SCREAMS AGAIN.

AND SCREAMS AGAIN.

AND SCREAMS AGAIN.

UH, HELLO?

YES. THIS IS EVELYN CREAM.

WHO IS...

THEY'VE TAKEN HER, CREAM.

THEY'VE TAKEN MY WIFE.

COME NOW.

KRAK!

MIRACLEMAN NIGHTMARES

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WELL?

PULSE AND RESPIRATION RATE INCREASING. SHE'S WAKING UP.

GIVE ME A TRANSPARENCY.

SHE'S AWAKE. PULSE STILL NORMAL... STARTING TO RISE A LITTLE NOW...

ANY DISTRESS?

NO. NOTHING YET.

HMM. CUT TO RED.

PULSE AND RESPIRATION RISING. GETTING SOME DISTRESS NOW... IT'S A STEADY CLIMB...

WAIT A MINUTE. IS THAT SOMETHING AROUND THE WOMB AREA?

IS WHAT SOMETHING?

OH...OH, IT CAN'T HAVE BEEN ANYTHING. NOTHING. IT'S GONE NOW. I THOUGHT I HAD A READING THERE, BUT...

YES, YES. IS THERE ANY DISTRESS?

UH...NO. NO, PULSE AND RESPIRATION NORMAL AGAIN. THAT'S VERY SUDDEN ISN'T IT?

GIVE ME A CONSTRUCT AND CLOSE ON THE FOETUS.

YES. YES, GOOD.

OBVIOUSLY SHE IS A VERY BRAVE AND CAPABLE WOMAN, ABLE TO ADAPT QUICKLY TO CHANGES IN ENVIRONMENT. ADMIRABLE.

EXTREMELY ADMIRABLE.

I WONDER WHAT SHE'S THINKING?

I KNOW WHAT YOU MUST BE THINKING.

MIRACLEMAN... I ASK YOU TO BELIEVE ME...

I HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS.

CREAM...

IF I DIDN'T ALREADY BELIEVE THAT, WOULD YOU STILL BE IN ONE PIECE?

WHO ELSE, BESIDES YOU, KNOWS THAT MORAN AND I SHARE OUR EXISTENCE?

NO ONE. MY FORMER EMPLOYERS WERE GIVEN A FICTITIOUS NAME.

IS THERE ANYONE ***ELSE*** WHO KNEW OF YOUR IDENTITY?

OF COURSE NOT! NO ONE EXCEPT YOU...

...AND BATES.

"HELLO?"

HELLO? ST. CRISPIN'S HOSPITAL?

AAH, YES. MY NAME IS CAUSLEY. I'M WITH THE RECORD. YES.

YES, THAT'S RIGHT.

"I WANTED TO CHECK SOMETHING WITH YOU. YOU REMEMBER THAT EXPLOSION OR WHATEVER IT WAS IN EAST LONDON?"

"THAT'S RIGHT. FIVE OR SIX MONTHS AGO NOW."

"YOU HAD A CHILD ADMITTED.. A BOY OF THIRTEEN OR SO, SUFFERING FROM SHOCK."

"HE'S STILL THERE? YOU'RE SURE?"

"COULD YOU CHECK?"

"THANK YOU. YES."

"HE *IS*?"

"YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY SURE?"

"YOU ARE. I SEE. THANK YOU, SISTER. YES. GOODNIGHT."

KDIK

"HE'S STILL THERE. IT WASN'T BATES. SHE ISN'T WITH HIM."

"THEN WHERE *IS* SHE?"

"MY FORMER EMPLOYERS AGREED NOT TO TROUBLE US FURTHER."

"PERHAPS THEY HAVE GONE BACK UPON THEIR WORD. PERHAPS THEY HAVE DISCOVERED YOUR IDENTITY INDEPENDENTLY."

"LET US SEE..."

HELLO? SIR DENNIS ARCH...

CREAM?

WHAT THE DEVIL DO YOU MEAN BY RINGING ME AT...

LISTEN VERY CAREFULLY, SIR DENNIS. I AM WITH MY... CLIENT AT THE MOMENT.

HE IS VERY UPSET. HIS WIFE HAS BEEN ABDUCTED.

BUT THEN YOU *KNOW* THAT, DON'T YOU?

WHAT? HIS WIFE..?

CREAM, YOU AREN'T SUGGESTING THAT I...

CREAM, LISTEN, IN GOD'S NAME...

I SUGGEST *YOU* LISTEN, SIR DENNIS.

UNLESS SHE IS DELIVERED UNHARMED WITHIN THE NEXT HOUR, MY CLIENT WILL DEVASTATE LONDON.

AN HOUR AFTER THAT HE WILL REDUCE BIRMINGHAM TO POWDER.

THEN LIVERPOOL. THEN MANCHESTER. THEN SHEFFIELD...

CREAM NO! WE HAVEN'T GOT HER. PLEASE, HE MUST BELIEVE US...

CREAM, UPON MY OATH IN THE SIGHT OF GOD, *WE HAVEN'T GOT HER.* PLEASE...

THEY HAVEN'T GOT HER.

CREAM? ARE YOU *THERE?* LISTEN, IF SOMEONE'S ABDUCTED THE CREATURE'S WIFE, THERE'S ONLY ONE PERSON IT *CAN* BE...

DR. EMIL GARGUNZA, MRS. MORAN.

I AM VERY HONOURED TO MAKE YOUR AQUAINTANCE.

GARGUNZA?

GARGUNZA. AND HOW IS YOUR HUSBAND?

HOW IS MIRACLEMAN?

MY HUSBAND?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.

LOOK, WHAT'S GOING *ON* HERE?

HEH.

MRS. MORAN, PLEASE...

...DO NOT PLAY THE STUPID COW.

I AM QUITE CONVERSANT WITH THE FACT THAT YOUR HUSBAND AND MIRACLEMAN ARE ONE AND THE SAME.

I CREATED HIM.

HE IS ALMOST MY ***SON***.

AND SHORTLY, MRS. MORAN...

VERY SHORTLY...

...HE WILL BE MY FATHER.

TO BE CONTINUED...

PROJECT ZARATHUSTRA. THE COTSWOLD HILLS. NOVEMBER 1961...

COFFEE, DR. G?

"GAR-GUN-ZA," DOCTOR FABIAN. IT'S ONLY THREE SYLLABLES. PLEASE USE IT.

NO. NO COFFEE, THANK YOU.

THERE'S A PROBLEM.

I'VE BEEN TRYING TO FEED THE BRUTES SCENARIO OH-NINE-OBLIQUE-NINE ALL EVENING...ONE OF THE VARIANT "YOUNG NASTY-MAN" ENCOUNTER SEQUENCES. THEY'RE RESISTING IT.

RESISTING IT? BUT SURELY THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE...

OF COURSE IT'S IMPOSSIBLE. IF IT WERE POSSIBLE IT WOULDN'T BE CAUSING ME ANY PROBLEMS WOULD IT? THEY'RE OVER-RIDING THE SOMATIC INDUCERS SOMEHOW...

IT'S THEIR MINDS. I WORRIED ABOUT THIS BACK IN '49 WHEN WE COMMENCED ZARATHUSTRA. ALL THEIR POWER COMES FROM THEIR MINDS, AND THOSE MINDS ARE DEVELOPING ALL THE TIME.

ALL THE TIME...

THE THING IS, THEY CAN'T BE DOING IT CONSCIOUSLY. ONE OF THEM MUST BE REACHING OUT WITH HIS SUBCONSCIOUS AND OVER-RIDING OUR GUIDANCE PROGRAMME IN SOME WAY...

DR. GARGUNZA? I THINK THE PROBLEM'S IRONED ITSELF OUT. LOOK... THE SCREENS ARE REGISTERING. IT MUST HAVE BEEN A CIRCUIT JAM. THEY'RE ACCEPTING DREAM INPUT AGAIN...

HOW VERY ODD.

...ESPECIALLY SINCE I GAVE UP AND SWITCHED THE SOMATIC INDUCERS OFF FIVE MINUTES AGO.

YOU..?

THAT ISN'T ONE OF OUR DREAM PROGRAMMES? BUT IF IT *ISN'T*, THEN...

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"...WHERE ARE THEY?"

MM

HEY, M.M.! WHERE IN BLUE BLAZES *ARE* WE?

YEAH! LAST THING I REMEMBER WE WERE ON OUR WAY TO SLING THAT CREEP YOUNG NASTYMAN IN JAIL! WHAT HAPPENED?

I DON'T KNOW, KID...

...BUT I HAVE A STRANGE FEELING THAT THINGS AREN'T QUITE AS THEY SEEM. SOMETHING TELLS ME THAT WE'RE PLAYING A GAME FOR HIGH STAKES AGAINST A DEADLY ENEMY.

WE'D BEST BE ON OUR GUARD...

ARE YOU KIDDING, MICKEY? WHO'D BE CHUMP ENOUGH TO THINK THEY COULD TAKE ON ALL THREE OF ***US*** AND STILL COME OUT TOPS? WHY, WE'RE ***THE MIGHTIEST MORTALS IN THE UNIVERSE!***

THAT'S TRUE, YOUNGSTER...

MIRACLEMAN

FAMILY

THE RED KING SYNDROME

...BUT WHICH UNIVERSE?

MAYBE WE'LL FIND SOME ANSWERS OVER THERE, M.M.!

HOLY MACARONI.

IT'S SOME SORT OF PALACE... BUT IT'S SO BIG! IT LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF A CRAZY DREAM...

...OR A NIGHTMARE! ARE YOU THINKING WHAT I'M THINKING, M.M.?

CHECK! WHOEVER IT IS SKULKING IN THAT OVERGROWN FUNHOUSE HAD BETTER PREPARE FOR A VISIT...

...FROM THE MIRACLEMAN FAMILY!

I DON'T LIKE THIS.

I DON'T LIKE THIS AT *ALL.*

ALL THESE REFERENCES TO DREAMS... THIS "SLEEPYTOWN"...THEIR SUB-CONSCIOUS MINDS ARE TRYING TO TELL THEM THAT WHAT THEY'RE EXPERIENCING ISN'T REAL.

DO YOU KNOW, I THINK THEY'RE TRYING TO WAKE UP.

DOCTOR...

NOBODY AROUND. THIS PLACE SEEMS PRETTY QUIET...

HMMM. ALMOST *TOO* QUIET. LET'S TAKE A LOOK IN THAT HANGAR DOWN THERE...

H-HEY, PALS?

I THINK YOU BETTER TAKE A LOOK AT *THIS*...

WHAT *IS* IT, K.M.? WHAT DO YOU SEE?

JEEPERS! WHAT TH...?

M-MICKEY? MICKEY, WHAT *ARE* THEY?

THEY'RE GIANTS. HUGE SLUMBERING GIANTS ENSNARED WITH WIRES AND CABLES...

...AND THEY LOOK LIKE *US!*

M.M., THIS IS GETTING *SPOOKY.* LET'S MOVE ON TO SOMEWHERE ELSE...

THIS IS ABSOLUTELY FASCINATING.

THEIR SUBCONSCIOUS MINDS ARE TRYING TO OVERLOAD ON ABSURDITY, TO SHOCK THE BRAIN INTO WAKEFULNESS BY CROSSING THE THRESHOLD OF DISBELIEF...

THROUGH HERE...

FORTUNATELY, DR. FABIAN, I AM NOT KNOWN AS A GENIUS FOR THE MANNER IN WHICH I BRUSH MY TEETH. I FORESAW THIS EVENTUALITY. WE ARE QUITE SECURE.

BUT IF THEY WAKE...

IN 1952 I INSTALLED A FAILSAFE DEVICE AGAINST THE DAY WHEN OUR SUBJECTS WOULD BEGIN TO PERCEIVE THE BARS OF THEIR MENTAL PRISON...

IT...IT LOOKS LIKE A ***DUNGEON*** OF SOME SORT...

IT IS THE POWER OF THEIR MINDS WHICH IS THWARTING OUR GUIDANCE PROGRAMMES. THESE DAMPER FIELDS WILL REDUCE THAT POWER GRADUALLY...

...UNTIL THEY ARE COMPLETELY DRAINED.

KID! LOOK OUT! YOUNG!

VAMPIRES!!

VAMPIRES?

DOCTOR...THE DAMPER FIELDS AREN'T *WORKING!* CAN THEY BE *FIGHTING* THE DRAINING EFFECT IN SOME WAY?

YES. YES, IT SEEMS THEY CAN.

"TELL ME, DR. FABIAN... HAVE YOU EVER READ 'ALICE IN WONDERLAND'?"

"YOU HAVE? DO YOU REMEMBER THE RED KING?"

"HE SLEPT AND DREAMED, AND NO-ONE DARED WAKE HIM."

"THEY WERE AFRAID, YOU SEE, THAT THEY WERE ALL PART OF HIS DREAM, AND THAT WERE HE TO WAKE THE WHOLE OF EXISTENCE WOULD SIMPLY VANISH."

...AND HERE WE ARE WITH THESE HORRIBLY POWERFUL CREATURES THAT WE HAVE MANAGED TO KEEP SUPPLIED WITH DREAMS FOR SEVEN YEARS. AN INTERESTING PARALLEL, DON'T YOU THINK?

UH, WELL, YES, BUT... I MEAN, THE WHOLE OF EXISTENCE WON'T COME TO AN END IF *THESE* THINGS WAKE UP, WILL IT?

IT WILL FOR US.